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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews an instructor's experience in teaching a social studies methods course. The course focused on the themes of anti-racist education and critical pedagogy and was taught to a group of eight aboriginal women enrolled in the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). SUNTEP is an affirmative action teacher education program for students of Metis ancestry in Saskatchewan. The class encouraged social change by developing preservice teachers into organic intellectuals. Organic intellectuals use the language of their culture to express the real experiences and feelings of their people. Anti-racist education focuses on changing institutions rather than individuals. Critical pedagogy incorporates student experience and lived culture as a curriculum concern, and emphasizes dialogue that organizes knowledge students already possess. Requirements of the class included: (1) a paper analyzing a local education policy based on multicultural assumptions; (2) presentation of a play applying anti-racist theory; (3) construction of a learning center with an anti-racist focus; and (4) a final exam in essay form. Students initially objected to the unconventional approach to the course and were intimidated by the abstract theoreticism of the instructor. Responses on final exams and class evaluations suggest that students experienced personal growth and understood the concepts. (KS)

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Aboriginal Teachers as Organic Intellectuals

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Aboriginal Teachers as Organic Intellectuals

I. Introduction

Most teacher education programs in North America serve to maintain a social system based on inequality and injustice (Popkewitz, 1987; Ginsburg, 1988). Graduates from these teacher education programs also tend to be politically conservative citizens (Lortie, 1975). Furthermore, comparative data suggests that aboriginal teachers will oppose or limit militant or radical trends within indigenous organizations or social movements. (Marable, 1984, 1985; Sarup, 1986). An alternative to this scenario exists, however, if aboriginal teachers can use their academic experience to develop a broad, critical understanding of Canadian indigenous history and social conditions, including racist schooling. Such teachers have the potential of integrating their own cultural experience and memories of racist schooling with a new theoretical consciousness in order to contribute to movements for progressive social change, at least in the field of education. This paper shows how a university course which focused on anti-racist education and critical pedagogy was used by eight aboriginal women to develop their capacity as "organic" intellectuals - preservice teachers with a commitment to anti-racist education.

Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) has contributed much to current theorizing in the sociology of education (Apple, 1985; Giroux, 1988; Sharp, 1980; Weiler, 1988). Although Gramsci lived and wrote in Italy in the 1930's, his commitment to the advancement of relatively powerless people and his brilliant analyses of the state, culture, ideology, and the process of fundamental political change make his insights of specific and current value to those working in the field of aboriginal education who are dissatisfied with the status quo and seek a transformation in existing power relations between the state and aboriginal people. Gramsci's first commitment was to the Italian working-class. While not all aboriginal Canadians are located within the working-class, they do share a relative lack of political power and access to capital which I argue make Gramsci's arguments and analyses useful. With reference to the role of intellectuals, for example, Gramsci argued that each social class:

> creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in economic but also in the social and political fields (Quoted in McLellan, 1979, p. 101).

According to Gramsci, fundamental social change will arise, in part, from the work of "organic" intellectuals from the working-class. Organic intellectuals from aboriginal communities, then, do not simply describe social life from outside like social scientists, but use the language of their culture to express the real experiences and feelings of their people. In order to express and truly understand these experiences, they must feel the same passions as the people (Kolakowski, 1978). The responsibility of these organic intellectuals is to draw out and make coherent the latent aspirations and potentialities already inherent in their people's activity. The relationship of organic intellectuals and their social group is thus a dialectical one: they draw knowledge from their social community's experience at the same time as they provide "clear theoretical consciousness of. . .practical activity" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 333) back to them. Organic intellectuals, then, have a capacity and promise which goes beyond the potential of the most theoretically-developed and committed member of the middle-class intelligentsia: they speak both from and *to* their own communities.

This paper constitutes a review of my experience in teaching a course which focused on the themes of anti-racist education and critical pedagogy to a group of eight aboriginal women enrolled in the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). The paper examines the theory which informed the course design and delivery, the process for course delivery, and presents conclusions from reflections on the work of doing anti-racist education with aboriginal preservice teachers. Initially, the proposed focus of the course was resisted by the students, who argued for a more conventional course consistent with dominant forms of teacher education. My own abstract theoreticism, abstract langue, idealism, and limited understanding of the women's lived culture contributed significantly to their resistance in the beginning. The result was a near inversion of more common conflicts between the conservative ideologies of teachers in authority and the cultural forms of minority and working -class student populations (McLaren, 1989; Weis, 1985; Willis, 1977). However, a dialogical strategy underlying the pedagogy of the

course led: first, to a space and a sense of trust where sources of conflict could be taken up; second, to the relatively democratic negotiation of the terms for the course; third, to a an appropriation by the students of at least elements of critical pedagogy; fourth, to the continuing education of a radical teacher educator.

Since the course was designed to introduce theory drawn from the fields of both anti-racist education and critical pedagogy, the dialogical process also encouraged the students to reflect together on their own earlier schooling experience and its relationship to racism in their broader community. As their collective consciousness became more coherent, they also moved towards an increasingly more sophisticated articulation of aboriginal people's experience and oppression both in the social and economic realms. The students' expressions in class often resonated with the anger motivated by both the memory and the currently lived effects of racism. However, we did not restrict our mutual analysis and learning to critique alone. The students also moved significantly towards a "language of possibility" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985).[1]

SUNTEP is an affirmative action teacher education program for students of Metis ancestry in Saskatchewan. A contractual arrangement with the local District Chiefs, however, meant that two of the students were Cree. All of the eight students were women, a condition not entirely unrepresentative of the SUNTEP student population in general, and the North American teaching workforce as a whole (Apple, 1987; Marshall, 1987).[2] SUNTEP operates at three provincial sites, and had an enrollment of one hundred eighty seven (187) students in the 1989-90 academic year. Although all of the students are aboriginal people, none of the teaching faculty at the centre where this case study was set were aboriginal.[3] I had been employed by the University of Saskatchewan to teach "EdCur 380.3: Senior Methods in Teaching Elementary Social Studies" for the program at its site in Forestland.

Methodologically, the reflections represented here were developed in two stages. First, fieldnotes were kept of plans which were developed for delivering the course, elements of student discourse during the progress of each class meeting, and ethnographic summaries written at the completion of each meeting. Documents written for presentation to the group and excerpts from students' written papers were also kept. Second, after the completion

of the course all field notes and documents were reviewed and analyzed, as were students' final exams and a typed copy of their course evaluations. Data were analyzed and are presented form the perspective of critical sociology in education (Weiler, 1988; McCarthy and Apple, 1988). Personal and place names used here are fictional. Students gave written permission for use of data from the class for the construction of this paper. The personal and subjective style of this paper is meant to recognize that each person's pedagogic style *is* both personal and creative, that there are no recipes, and that I take personal responsibility for the limitations of the course and its pedagogy. The attempt to map out my pedagogy in some detail is a response to what I sense as a lack of concreteness in much of in the literature.

Given the historic relation between Metis and White people in central Canada, and the fact that all of the students were women, the pedagogic and research relationships were both problematic. Therefore, some space and effort needs to be given to my own social location in the production of this paper. Explicit consciousness and recognition of my subject position may both make visible the limitations of the analysis which follows and enable me to use the strengths I bring to this work. My social location can best be explained by my history (Hall, 1988; Spivak, 1990). I have lived most of my life in the inconsistent and unpredictable location characteristic of many middle-class radical intellectuals in advanced capitalist countries of the late twentieth century. That is, as a socialist, I have intentionally spent most of my working life attempting to produce social change in the interests of those without property. On the other hand, I have accumulated relative privilege both by chance of birth and as a result of benefits which often accrue to those with a university education. That is, my historical trajectory begins in a settler economy established through the dispossession of aboriginal people. Ultimately, the same historical dynamic which colonized aboriginal people on the prairies, that is, capitalism on a world scale, also produced economic conditions where it was impossible for me to become an independent commodity producer on a Saskatchewan farm. It was necessary to borrow money to attend university; yet I could train and work as a teacher and simultaneously for social change without creating long-term rupture to my life chances within the middle-class. In sum, as the Metis occupy a social location between treaty Indians and White society, I occupied a social location

between the working-class and the sons and daughters of the professional class.

My location in relation to gender is not quite analogous. Racism was a silent issue in the formative years of my youth, whereas I had a ready-made setting for the learning of patriarchal gender relations within my nuclear family. This early sexist learning has never been completely divorced from my my mature consciousness or practice. An introduction to Marxism and the student politics of the 1960's did contribute to a more secure and long-lasting alignment with the interests of those without power and property, however. Furthermore, my employment as a classroom instructor on a Saskatchewan Indian reserve in the 1970's moved me from a position of moral and political support to personal investment in the improvement of conditions for aboriginal people. To work as a radical teacher educator within SUNTEP, then, is to engage with a tension between ideology and material position. This contradiction could not help but affect the reciprocal relations I developed with my students. For their part, the students may have seen less difference than I did between myself and the many other male, White university teachers they had listened to and written papers and exams for. On the other hand, the fact that most students were "mixed blood" people may have mediated our "racial" difference.

II. Theoretical Framework

The idea of teaching a Social Studies Methods course with a conventional structure and content was not something I considered. As Paulo Freire advises, "There are no neutral 'methodologists' who can teach how to teach history, geography, language, or mathematics neutrally" (1983, p. 102). Teaching a Methods course in a College of Education setting is a political act which most often asks the instructor to unproblematically transmit the behaviourist and empiricist ideology represented by most North American teacher education programs (Ginsburg, 1988; Popkewitz, 1987). Specifically, Social Studies Methods texts and courses usually reflect the Tayloristic principles of scientific management and assume that social studies classrooms operate principally according to an ethic of control (Grundy, 1987; McNeil, 1988; Schiro, 1978). To replicate these models for social studies teaching would be to reinforce the notion that aboriginal and other students resist or refuse social studies school work because of inherent

limitations in either students, or teachers, or both. It would at the same time accept the notion of the hegemonic social studies curriculum and the idea that problems in social studies classrooms can be repaired through implementation of the appropriate value-neutral technique.

Rather, an approach to teachers' work which acknowledged that "Education must be understood as producing not only knowledge but also political subjects" (Giroux, 1991, forthcoming, p. 47) was necessary. I assumed that a commitment to and understanding of anti-racist education and critical pedagogy could most effectively be built out of students' theoretical comprehension of their personal schooling history and a critique of the dominant state ideology with reference to racist schooling: multicultural education. From a theoretical consciousness of the limitations of what exists we would move to the formation of a theory for change constructed on strategies for anti-racist education and critical pedagogy. I do not want to suggest here that the theoretical framework utilized in the course is the only legitimate construct for promoting the well-being of aboriginal students. Teacher educators should be conscious that "Thought is nothing more and nothing less than a historically locatable set of practices" (Rabinow, 1986, p. 239), so that traditional aboriginal "styles of thinking" (Rabinow, p. 237) have as much purchase on "truth" as any Eurocentric modes of rationality (Amin, 1989). Certainly, my fundamentally Marxist framework originates within one tradition of European rationality.

Five major concepts formed the basis for developing students' "language of critique" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985); Social reproduction; cultural reproduction; cultural production; resistance; and (ideological) hegemony. Each of these major concepts enjoys currency within the critical sociological literature (Weiler, 1988). The concepts can be summarily defined as follows:

(a) Social reproduction: The replacement of a relationship between social classes or groups. In a number of ways, Saskatchewan schools exclude aboriginal children from the potential benefits of formal education. Through these practices, *social reproduction* is realized, ultimately, in the "racial" division of labour, whereby some people are school executives and others are janitors, for example.

(b) Resistance: The oppositional practices of some children to the racist or otherwise oppressive practices and attitudes exercised against them in schools. The precise meaning of the concept is currently under debate (Weiler, 1988; Carnoy, 1989). However, it serves as an alternative

explanation for student "misbehaviour" to the concept of deviance.

(c) Cultural reproduction: Minority and working-class children are in some ways implicated in the processes which result in their own subordination. Partly as a result of their own resistance, some children become consigned to live out their lives at the bottom of the social hierarchy in some ways similar to the lives of their parents and kin. Thus, *cultural reproduction* occurs both through the actions of the victims of racism and through the overt practices of personnel in the field of public education (Ogbu, 1988; Weis, 1985). Practices which are culturally reproductive are often reflections of ideas and attitudes inherited through the culture of the family, kin, or social group. Cultural reproduction of the dominant society also occurs through the historical practices of the school in its privileging of bourgeois cultural forms (Giroux and Simon, 1989).

(d) Cultural production: To the extent that the students' resistance takes the form of creating new forms of cultural attitudes and practices, such as the wearing of nose rings in symbolic opposition to mainstream cultural norms, *cultural production* has transpired.

(e) Ideological hegemony, or hegemony: Refers to the ways in which the state works to ensure that oppressed and exploited populations give consent to their own domination and that of others. Hegemony depends, in large part, on people accepting the ruling ideas in society as "common sense." One of the major institutions in society for gaining ideological hegemony is the school (Althusser, 1971). Hegemony is never completely secured by the state, however, so policies and practices are constantly shifting to secure it.

Hegemony is maintained, primarily, through the operations of the institutions of *civil society*, such as the church, trade unions, schools, and the press. Civil society is the site of ideological production. It is civil society which supports the persistence of workers' "common sense", that is, those views "inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 333). In contrast, workers also produce a view of the world "which emerges from the real activity of each man (sic)" (p. 326). That is, because subordinate populations are daily engaged in practical activity in a world of oppression and exploitation, consent to rule is never passively given. Elements of "good sense", that is, of the working class' "own conception of the world, even if only embryonic. . . manifests itself in action, but occasionally and in flashes - when, that is, the group is acting as an organic totality" (p. 327). However, the worker has "no clear theoretical consciousness of his practical activity. . . which in reality unites him with all his fellow-workers in the practical transformation of the real world" (p.

333). The result of the transmission and partial acceptance of "common sense," which conflicts with "good sense" is a "contradictory consciousness" (p. 333), or "two theoretical consciousnesses" (p. 333). This is the terrain for the cultural and ideological work of the organic intellectual. Organic intellectuals seek to "refashion and transform" common sense through the propagation of "organic ideologies" in order to create " a new form of national-popular will. . . to interrupt, renovate, and transform in a more systematic direction the practical consciousness of the masses" (Hall, 1988, p. 55).

SUNTEP was created on the basis of multiculturalist assumptions, to produce "role models" (Hesch, 1989b) ; and the program's primary non-aboriginal support comes from those who understand SUNTEP graduates as fulfilling a multiculturalist mandate (Hesch, 1989a). Therefore, the ideology of multicultural education was central to the identity of "teacher" which my students were engaged in constructing. In this analysis, multicultural education can be viewed as a strategy of the state to secure hegemony in the field of "race relations." Troyna and Williams (1986) argue that multiculturalists *define* educational problems which arise from a multiracial society as stemming from the existence of minority children. These problems include "underachievement", poor motivation, indiscipline and both cultural and psychological alienation, low self-esteem, damaged personal identities and cultural differences. The *origins* of problems for multicultural educators lie in the following: (a) the relationship between minority students and the dominant society produce a lack of self-respect, self-esteem, and/or identity problems; (b) as with multiculturalism's predecessor, assimilation theory, parents continue to be blamed for the child's performance in school, due to both lack of stability and educational, especially, language, backwardness; (c) minority cultures are not acknowledged or respected in school settings; (d) disadvantaged or deprived material conditions for families limit the possibilities of learning. To confuse the effects of racism with perceived causes located in the minority family is to understand minority experience as a pathology (Lawrence, 1983). In each case, the gaze of the policy-maker falls on the subjects, the victims of racism, rather than its perpetrators.

Following from this identification and analysis of minority education, multicultural education policy recommendations are aimed at

compensatory solutions, designed to remedy linguistic, cultural, and psychic deficits. A great deal of stress is placed on the development of a multicultural curriculum aiming to increase students' motivation and commitment to educational achievement. Since racism is perceived as a problem of attitude, the multicultural curriculum is also intended to educate White students out of their prejudices (Manicom, 1987). Hazel Carby's (1982) description and analysis of multicultural education policy in Britain during the 1970's also provides a very useful summary of the multicultural education strategies. Amongst these, multicultural educators are concerned about culturally biased testing and "progressive methods" of teaching, but the concern remains with improving the performance of the individual child rather than examining schooling as a means of social reproduction.

Multicultural educators share common assumptions with multiculturalists in general. The two most frequently made criticisms of multiculturalism are: first, that it casts the experience of victims of racism purely within a culturalist theoretical framework; second, multiculturalism usually reifies culture. That is, in relying on a culturalist framework, multiculturalism fails to recognize the ways in which class (Buchignani, 1980; Ng, 1987; Osborne, 1987) and gender (McCarthy and Apple, 1988; Ng, 1987; Witt, 1988) contribute to the reality experienced by racial and ethnic groups. To reify culture is to turn it into a dead, static thing. Rather than understanding culture as lived experience, we are asked to honour cultural heritages in the form of traditional songs and dance (Ng, 1981; Rizvi, 1986; Simon, 1987). Ethnicity or cultural groups are socially constructed and historically variable, not fixed in time (Mullings, 1984). These two limitations of multiculturalism have a single ideological utility for the state and capital, a point made both clearly and succinctly by Jackie Wilson:

> The Canadian multiculturalism policy seems to guarantee that we can each do our little dances and flash our pretty, lacy petticoats while we drink our ethnic drinks and admire each other's handicrafts, as long as we realize that in reality the mosaic is vertically organized. It says little about meeting the needs of those of us whose place is at the bottom of that vertical column, who can not find decent employment or housing, where creative spirit is crushed by poverty and incessant insecurity, whose children are destined only to replace us in our bottom slots. It does not speak to the injustice that pervades our daily lives if our hair style or skin colour is unlike that of the

members at the top of the column (Quoted in Bullivant, 1981, p.12).

As will be shown in detail elsewhere in this text (see Rezai-Rashti), much of what passes for anti-racist education is, in fact, multiculturalism in new clothing (Brandt, 1986; Hatcher, 1987). Anti-racist education can, however, serve as a counter-hegemonic strategy or set of strategies in which the effects of racist education are challenged, struggled against, and at least partially changed. Troyna and Williams (1986) argue that in contrast to multicultural education, anti-racist educators *define* educational problems for minority children as arising from the normal operations of capitalist schooling in a racist social order, rather than from the presence of aboriginal children, for example, in the schools. Rather than being concerned with the presumed deficiencies or pathological nature of aboriginal children, anti-racist educators focus their analyses on the origin and perpetuation of racism and the production and reproduction of "racial" inequality. Instead of developing programs and curricula to change children so they adjust to the school, anti-racist educators are concerned with changing institutions, through such measures as the politicization of the formal curriculum, attention to the "hidden" curriculum, changes in the ways children are streamed and assessed, the hiring of more minority staff, and the promotion of those already hired. The minority teachers, however, are not expected to serve as models of accommodating behaviour and simply reduce minority student resistance, but to contribute to the achievement of "racial" justice and equality and to affirm *lived* minority cultural practices and attitudes.[4] Schools do not conduct their business in social isolation, but are part of a complex and systematic process at work in society at large. Therefore, anti-racist educators must also be active in the social/public arena (Brandt, 1986). An anti-racist education de-reifies multiculturalist conceptions of culture by examining culture as it is lived, and incorporates factors of class and gender into notions of, for example, aboriginal culture.

The idea of "race" lost all credibility as a concept with any scientific validity some fifty years ago (Miles, 1989), and is therefore placed within quotation marks in this paper, following Robert Miles (1989). However, the ideology of racism always reflects real observable phenomena in some distorted way(Miles, 1989). The notion of the "lazy Indian," for example, is related to high unemployment rates amongst aboriginal Canadians and

particular cultural practices amongst some aboriginal people who resist capitalism's requirement for a low-paid, menial labour force to do the "dirty work" in the economy. Therefore, anti-racist education is futile if it restricts its aims to changing the attitudes of racists. The aim must be to attack the conditions which produce racism (Miles, 1989).

The Social Studies Methods course was aimed to help produce pedagogues rather than skilled classroom technicians. That is, borrowing from Giroux and Simon (1989), I take *pedagogy* to be a deliberate attempt to influence *how* and *what* knowledge and identities are produced in a particular society. Pedagogy attempts to influence the *occurrence* and *qualities* of students' experiences. *Pedagogues* assume that knowledge is *constructed* by individuals in a social context. That is, knowledge does not exist in books or on the air waves. Rather, we each interpret words differently, based largely on the nature of our own previous experiences in life. Thus, the same structured learning experience leads to different "ownership" of knowledge by individuals. A pedagogue, then, must attend to all of the following: (a)curriculum content and design; (b)classroom strategies and techniques; (c) a time and space for the practicing of these strategies and techniques; (d) evaluation purposes and methods.

However, pedagogy is not neutral. That is, what actually takes place in a classroom is a reflection of a *view* about the nature of teachers' work within a classroom and the outcomes of that work. What work a teacher does in a classroom will tell us much concerning what that teacher believes about: (a)What knowledge is most valuable; (b)What kinds of desire we can have; (c) What it means to know something; (d) How we can develop our own identities, our views of others, and our views of our physical and social environment. A teacher's answers to these questions reflect an understanding of who has *power* in society, both legitimately and actually, and also who *should* have power. Politics, in society, is concerned with the question and problem of power. Therefore, to develop a preferred form of pedagogy is to develop a political view.

The concept of *critical* pedagogy asks: To whom are we committed? If, as teachers, we want to work in such a way that our students can develop their abilities to live in and participate in a more socially just and democratic society; and, further, if we want to work in such a way that our students can

develop all of their personal potential, then our pedagogy must be linked to the goals of educating students: (a)To understand why things are the way they are and how they got to be that way; (b)To ask questions about the nature of their everyday lives; (c) To take risks and to challenge unequal forms of power; (d)To have a vision of a world that doesn't exist yet in order to strengthen the possibility for creating a better society. To be committed to this approach to teaching is to be committed to critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy incorporates student experience and lived culture as a curriculum concern. In the sense that critical pedagogy is implicated in the construction of identities and engages in a study of lived culture, it is itself a cultural practice.

One of the central concepts of critical pedagogy is the notion of dialogue, or dialogical education. This means considerably more than the conventional "class discussion" format popular in some humanist classrooms. At a theoretical level, dialogue is best articulated by a leading founder of critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire:

> Parallel with the reorganization of the means of production, an essential task for critical understanding and attention in a revolutionary society is the valorization - and not the idealization - of popular wisdom that includes the creative activity of a people and reveals the levels of their knowledge regarding reality. What is implied is not the transmission to the people of a knowledge previously elaborated, a process that ignores what they already know, but the act of returning to them, in an organized form, what they have themselves offered in a disorganized form. In other words, it is a process of knowing with the people how they know things and the level of that knowledge. This means challenging them, through critical reflection, regarding their own practical experience and the ends that motivate them in order, in the end, to organize the findings, and thus replace mere opinion about facts with an increasingly rigorous understanding of their significance (1983, pp. 24-25).

This style of work comes very close to the cultural work outlined for organic intellectuals by Antonio Gramsci (Hommen, 1986).

III Course Design

This section outlines the major assumptions, goals, and requirements of the course. This structural overview of the course will show how these assumptions, goals, and requirements contributed to the development of

organic intellectuals. In the Gramscian sense that every person is an intellectual, the students came to the program as intellectuals. Their capacity to think and act analytically had been strengthened in previous courses in the program as well, notably a Native Studies course with Metis radical nationalist Howard Adams (1989). This course only facilitated students "organicity" in relation to the problems of schooling for aboriginal children. Planning the goals and requirements for the course was an important stage in its limited achievements. This section also provides a necessary foreground for understanding the dialectic between the structure of the course and the cultural politics at play as we moved through the term.

The course was designed with the understanding that critical pedagogy lends itself well to a project of facilitating the further development of organic intellectuals and also shares fundamental goals with anti-racist education. The power relations between students and teachers which are reflected in educational practices are as political as explicit curriculum content (Giroux, 1983). Consequently, a pedagogy which democratically restructured the classroom relations between the students and myself was planned. More specifically, since anti-racist education includes a critical analysis of curriculum content and its method of transmission, as well as an examination of the "hidden curriculum" (Brandt, 1986), an alternative to a lecturing or "banking" (Freire, 1974) method seemed preferable. That is, if schooling and capitalist society create a "culture of silence" (Freire, 1974) amongst racism's immediate victims, then a teaching style directed against silencing of students was in itself an anti-racist measure. Anti-racist education's affirmation of life histories and the lived experience of racism's immediate victims (Brandt, 1986) could be confirmed and validated by the practice of dialogical education and attention to "generative themes" (Freire, 1984) from students' everyday and historical existence. In brief, critical pedagogy's commitment to "education for critical consciousness" (Friere, 1973) could be satisfied by meeting the anti-racist goal of examining the reproduction of racialized divisions of labour, economic wealth, and cultural privilege (Carter & Williams, 1987).

The course was designed to move from a critique of the problem of racist education to the development of practical possibilities for anti-racist education. There were four evaluated assignments for the course. In the

first course assignment I asked the students to write brief papers critically analyzing a local education policy based on multiculturalist assumptions. The assignment was intended to show the limitations of multiculturalism as a solution to aboriginal concerns about schooling, to identify multiculturalist policy as a local phenomenon affecting the lives of aboriginal children in the community, and to demonstrate the relevance of policy to the nature of teachers' work. For their second, and major, assignment, students were asked to develop an anti-racist project which would be utilized in some public way. The intent here was to allow the students to apply anti-racist education theory to practice, and also to establish the link between social action in the community and classroom practice, a principal of both anti-racist education and critical pedagogy (Brandt, 1986; Giroux, 1988). The third assignment was a concession by me to the expressed interests of my employer and asked students to construct a learning centre. Students were asked to develop the learning centre using ideas drawn from the text, (Open Minds to Equality [Schniedewind and Davidson, 1983]), in order to maintain an anti-racist focus. Both the major anti-racist project and the learning centre were to be completed through group work in order to encourage group identity, collective consciousness, and to undercut the individualistic ethos of conventional schooling. Finally, the students were required by university regulation to write a final exam. The very fact that there *were* requirements which would be graded and become an element in the students' permanent university transcripts underlined the structural limitations imposed on the course, the students, and myself.

Thus, within limits imposed by the university, operating as state institution and employer, the course was designed to facilitate the development of intellectuals who would be more familiar with the limitations of racist and capitalist schooling, and prepared to both speak and act, in even local ways, against these limitations and for progressive alternatives.

IV Pedagogy for Organic Intellectuals

The process through which the course developed was the most critical feature for its success. Essentially, three features of the course helped clarify the "good sense" of the organic intellectuals by the end of term: dialogue; negotiation; and the selection of anti-racist education as a "generative theme" (Freire, 1974). Both dialogue and negotiation contributed

to our sharing of power over the content, process, and evaluation of student work during the duration of the course. One effect of this limited but significant empowerment was to enhance students' sense that the social relations of the classroom are problematic and can be changed. Dialogue also encouraged students to collectively focus on the manifestations of racism in their personal and community lives. The theoretical *and* practical consciousness that a classroom can be a place for the legitimation of students' own knowledge, a place for discussion and critique of their cultural lives and local forms of oppression, was reinforced. Initially this aspect of the course seemed rather fruitless for their purposes; however, as the process continued they became more committed to the need for change. The selection of anti-racist education as a theme for the course generated by their prior experience and practical concerns (as I understood them) meant that course content developed students' theoretical understanding of racism and anti-racist education. It also meant that space was created in the classroom for the generation of their own theoretical consciousness.

The purpose of the following sub-sections is to demonstrate the ways in which this process unfolded. The first sub-section outlines the method which was used to produce dialogue and illustrates the process of negotiation. The sub-section will show how both collective consciousness and a sense of student empowerment were increased through this strategy. Some common difficulties with dialogical education and ways to transcend them are highlighted as a contribution to a strategy for critical teacher education. The second sub-section, "On Shooting Yourself in the Foot," shows how contradictions in my own ideology and practice limited the potential achievements of the course. The third sub-section, "Just Getting Us Mad. . ." begins to demonstrate the contribution of dialogical anti-racist education to the theoretical consciousness of the students. The final sub-section, "Synthesis," completes a description of the process we engaged in to reveal how we increasingly moved towards an integration of theoretical and practical consciousness.

IV (a) Dialogue and Negotiation

A dialogic approach to anti-racist education with the direct victims of racism is superior to a lecture method for the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical knowledge of the world. On the other hand, teacher

educators should not be ashamed to offer their own theoretical and practical resources to students (Freire, 1983). In our case, classroom dialogue was usually preceded by informal lectures. I established the overall direction of each class discussion through selection and assignment of appropriate course materials. The process of generating a critical discussion of assigned readings was usually initiated by my asking students: "What issues arose for you from the reading"? This question recognizes that knowledge-formation is not only a social process but is also highly personal, that it involves an integration of studied theoretical content with the biography of the reader. The question can also serve to reinforce democratic relations in the classroom, as it directs the "ownership" of discussion back to the students. Finally, students' anticipation of the question encourages an *active* and *praxical*[5] reading of the material to be studied.

At least three difficulties can arise in the process of dialogical education: (a) Moving beyond "class discussion" towards the development of meaningful theory; (b) Breaking students' ingrained dependence on teachers for the "right" answer; and (c) Creating a democratic classroom where dominant student personalities do not exclude the voices of the more submissive. At the beginning of the term, the students' initial responses to the readings sometimes failed to converge into mutual dialogue. One of two processes generally unfolded as the class meeting progressed, however. Either the students would find their own grounds for dialogue as time passed, or I would identify emerging issues by actively "reading" their discussion. That is, acting as facilitator of the meeting, I would attempt to "read" students' talk for emerging contradictions in lines of thinking, quickly summarize the contradiction, and return the problem inherent in the contradiction to them for further discussion and theorizing of their own. It was not unusual to be directly asked for my views on an emerging theoretical difference between students or reference to theory. I tried always to return the question to the student in order to encourage the generation of theory rooted in the students' own experience. When I was not delivering a planned lecture, I tried to limit my "answer-giving" to the clarification of theoretical concepts, and responding to problems with assignments.

Even within a group of students who were relatively homogeneous in terms of nationality, class, and gender, it became important to watch for the

unconscious "silencing" of some by more talkative others, and to intervene as facilitator in response to the smallest sign that a less dominant student was interested in speaking. My own practices of "silencing" were less visible to me, although I usually attempted to surrender space to students whenever an opportunity for students' critical reflection became apparent. For example, the group once "deviated" into a discussion of how, as children, they had learned to avoid school staff rooms because they had experienced them as hostile terrain. One of the students in the course remarked how "That feeling sticks with you for a long time," since, as a preservice teacher in field experience and mother, she still becomes nervous when she approaches a staff room (Fieldnotes, March 16, 1990). On the other hand, that same day I unproblematically expressed the view of the centre's faculty on why the sole aboriginal faculty member had left the year before - "for a better job." One of the more talkative students abruptly stopped participating in the class discussion.

My strategy for the course from the beginning had incorporated the principle of students as "co-directors of the curriculum" (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 91) on the premise that the practice of *negotiating* the contents and specific requirements of the course provided students with some power over the direction and content of their own learning. In our first meeting, for example, the students had chosen not to write a mid-term exam. Students were given the right to establish the criteria for the evaluation of their major assignment and to distribute marks between the different assignments. However, co-direction was as much a strategy for my own practical survival as a means of correcting for my own errors as it was based on political principle. For example, in the original course outline which I had presented to students, I had made reference to a "sit-in" in a public office as one of several alternative tactics students might wish to employ as a means of meeting the course requirement for a collective activity publicly directed against racism. The students' reaction to the notion was so vehement that I rather quickly moved to the recommendation for the production of a play, utilizing the skills they had learned through working with the progressive Drama educator on staff. The idea was well-received by most and at least accepted by the other students. Contents of the course evaluations at the end of term revealed that the students had, indeed, valued the power that the

negotiated curriculum gave them.

IV (b) On "Shooting Yourself in the Foot"

In my experience, the problems with dialogical education at the post-secondary level outlined above are quite typical. I anticipated them and consciously acted to minimize their occurrence. However, I unconsciously committed two errors during the first third of the course which led to student resistance and limited our potential achievements. First, I inadvertently subjected the students to an abstract theoreticism and language which initially alienated all of them. Second, in a somewhat related error, I allowed an idealistic commitment to my aims for the course to override a sound interpretation of what was possible given the material and ideological context we were working in. It is conceivable that, without the process of dialogue and negotiation which had simultaneously been established, I would have alienated myself from the students for the duration of the course.

Our first meeting was devoted to the distribution and discussion of the course outline and a lecture delivering a Marxist interpretation of Canadian Indian educational history, which I had written. Both the course outline and the lecture used theoretical language which was only confusing for the students. To prepare the students for their written assessment of the local multiculturalist educational policy, I also distributed a copy of a paper I had written on multiculturalism as a reading assignment. The paper was written in academic language and was so incomprehensible that it was necessary to jettison the planned work for our second meeting and endeavour to translate it into understandable English. At the end of term, one student summarized her response to our first encounters: ". . .I was ready to give up. He lectured in words I did not understand, and I left not knowing what had been said. His outline was beyond my comprehension" (Course evaluation, March 30, 1990, p. 1).[6] Clearly, working to develop organic intellectuals does not allow for excessive intellectualism. It is quite possible for academics committed to social change to at the same time unconsciously be guilty of elitism (Freire, 1983; McLaren, 1989). Different social class positions had presented different language systems and codes to the students and myself, a problem not uncommon in similar efforts (Shor & Freire, 1987). I had not been prepared for the political problem this class produced. Consequently, I shifted strategically towards careful attention to the integration of key

theoretical concepts with the ongoing student accounts from their personal lives and the discourse of the classroom.

Imbued with an idealistic commitment to the struggle against racism as I defined it, I was confused and suspicious of the students' initial resistance to the general orientation of the course and, in particular, the public nature of the major anti-racist project I had assigned. A more sensitive and materialist analysis of the context I was working in might have avoided my sense of dismay. Their reactions to the proposed course seemed initially to be motivated by three sentiments: first, "You might get yourself in trouble" (fieldnotes, Jan. 5, 1990); second, a sense of fatalism, summarized by one student's persistent argument that "They control us anyways" (fieldnotes, Jan. 5, 1990), therefore anti-racist education is futile; third, the course was not a Methods class, that is, they were not learning techniques and strategies for teaching social studies. By their own account, some students had come to SUNTEP to escape from a degrading life which many aboriginal women in the province must live out. This motivation was often based on maternal concern for the future of their children. Their immediate goal was, therefore, gaining access to the "cultural capital" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) offered by a university education. To achieve greater economic security required considerable sacrifice, as their sharing of textbooks and living in cramped low-rental apartments would testify. They were not, therefore, enthused to invest in a political enterprise designed by a White, financially secure, middle-class male.[6]

It would soon become clear that opposition to the project also had roots in the racism of the local school systems. Racism presents a context from which aboriginal people do not escape. My initial lack of attention to this material, lived context also caused another student to resist the project of the course. In response to my early announcement that the course was being used, in part, for research purposes, she:

> . . .felt at the beginning that this course was only taught for use as research. This kept me from listening to what Rick was teaching. (I) felt us Natives were being used again and if (the course) failed, it failed, no great loss, we won't try it on the Whites then. (This) made what he taught at the beginning go through one ear and out the other (Course evaluation, March 30, 1990, p. 2).

The sense of objectification expressed by this student was consistent with her experience in the program, and the experience of every other SUNTEP student. These preservice teachers are often, or usually, labelled as "SUNTEP students" during field placements in the public and separate schools. Consequently, it is commonplace for students to be asked or told to teach "the Native unit" during field placements in schools. Other curriculum interests they may have, in Music or Language Arts, for example, are treated as secondary. Furthermore, SUNTEP is viewed by many to be a "second-rate program" (Fieldnotes, February 15, 1990).[7] Therefore, in the words of one student, "TEP schools (i.e., aboriginal (T)eacher (E)ducation (P)rograms) involve a lot of pressure when attending them, because when one does something wrong, we all did it wrong" (Fieldnotes, Jan. 19, 1990). Doing "something wrong" can range from missing a day of field placement without sufficient notice or justification to saying or doing something which is deemed as inappropriate by the co-operating teacher. Thus, the insecurity which most preservice teachers feel when entering field experience opportunities (Ginsburg, 1988) is reinforced and strengthened by this labelling process.

Our fifth meeting became the critical day on which my anti-racist and pedagogic ideology, as well as my institutionalized authority as a university teacher, met head-on with the students' racialized cultural experience. The day would be described by one student as "homework day" (Fieldnotes, February 15, 1990). The planned agenda for the day was held hostage while I was confronted with students' accumulated frustrations with the course. They were intimately familiar with the nature of racism, they insisted. What they did not have an understanding of was "how to teach social studies." The students argued that they had to be "excellent" to overcome the expectations (or lack of same) of co-operating teachers during field placement or internship.[8]

The students attacked the requirement for a public presentation of the major assignment. They argued that the inferior social status of the program required them to perform as model preservice teachers throughout their teacher training in order to have an equal opportunity for employment. One of the students, Barbara, cited the case of a SUNTEP student who "said something" during field placement at the local Indian Residential School, the ramifications of which were still being heard and felt within the SUNTEP centre. "And *they*

like us"!, she stressed. "You've *got* a job"!, she reminded me. It was resolved that the play, which was being produced because "You wanted us to do it," would not have to be presented publicly (Fieldnotes, Feb. 15, 1990).

Organic intellectuals live the experience of subordinate groups and share the everyday passion and resistance of that group. The women's social position as students is somewhat different from their working-class or unemployed kin. However, they continue to share the anger and resentment of other aboriginal people at being labelled and objectified, when they are designated as second-rate SUNTEP students, or research subjects for this study, for example. They continue to be excluded from access to opportunity, such as teaching school subjects of their choice. Initially, my idealism blinded me to these connections. The strategy of dialogical education made it possible for the students to educate me and rescue the course.

IV(c) "Just Getting Us Mad All Over Again"

Organic intellectuals not only share the pride, anger, insecurities, and sense of marginalization of their social group, but also possess a theoretical and collective consciousness of the nature of their oppression. As the course progressed, both qualities were increasingly evident. Student resistance to the imposed project of training for anti-racist education did not dissipate entirely after "homework day." One student approached the program co-ordinator later to grieve that I was failing to teach them anything useful, but "just getting us mad all over again" (Fieldnotes, March 8, 1990). Indeed, anger and outrage were not uncommon during the first half of the term. At the same time, students were systematically re-examining their own life histories and social conditions, and beginning to develop a personal theoretical framework to explain what they remembered and still saw. Some were also broadening their perspective of the world encompassed by racism.

By late February I had lectured on the roots of multiculturalism in the political economy of crisis, as well as the opposition between the ideologies of multicultural and anti-racist education. The students had completed critiques of local multicultural education policies, and had read articles on the portrayal of Indians in children's books (Lewis, 1987) and the reproduction of racism in schools (Ortiz, 1988). We had examined selected children's books available in Saskatchewan for their portrayal of Indians, and identified the racist practices and attitudes in the schools they had attended or worked in.

We had drawn from their experiences to illustrate the racial division of labour in the region. And we had begun to review the text.

Students' collective analyses and critiques of their own social conditions were beginning to emerge out of their work together. For example, in their written analyses of local multiculturalist education policies, which included a recommendation for the affirmative action hiring of aboriginal people, one student observed that, "Many times the Boards may hire Native people, but not for a position of teacher, but as an aide, janitor, cook, etc. ." (Personal document, Jan. 19, 1990). Several of the students made reference to the unequal hiring practices of provincial school divisions they had observed. Lois, one of the two Cree women in the course, recognized the reification and continued marginalization of indigenous culture in her local community's school:

> (M)ulticultural education has had a positive effect on our reserve. It has made Indian people more aware and proud of their culture. . . .(B)ut it does have its drawbacks. The reproduction of cultural stereotypes. . . .The Cree Language program gives Indian people a feeling that they are contributing to the curriculum. But in reality I saw only one White student enrolled in Native Studies and not one (White) student was part of the language program (Personal document, Jan. 19, 1990).

The policy calls for involving indigenous parents in the school. Another student, Tracy, criticized the marginal role of indigenous parents in the school program:

> The Catholic system feels that parental involvement will increase if the parents plan and prepare nutrition programs. It has been my experience that they bring in an aboriginal parent to prepare and deliver the lunch. She rarely comes into the class, her name is "the apple lady" or "snack lady." She has no identity and does not effectively interact with the student population (Personal document, Jan. 19, 1990).

One of the parents in the group, Mary, explained how "race" and class differences impede a school division's efforts to encourage nominal aboriginal involvement on parent committees: "Some parents like to get involved, but they feel intimidated by. . .professional people. They are unsure of themselves. They are used to being scoffed at and don't want it to happen anymore" (Personal document, Jan. 19, 1990). Mary also has teaching experience. She wrote from the standpoint of an indigenous teacher to

describe her sense of alienation on a teaching staff and to warn of the possible outcome from multiculturalist "solutions":

> I feel that a lot of pressure is placed on aboriginal teachers to correct these "problems" that are being faced by aboriginal students. . . .I feel that. . .aboriginal teachers are looked at very critically. Watching them to "slip" in any area so that they can say that they are not really "qualified" to teach in this system. (Aboriginal teachers) have to be careful that they don't step on any toes. They are constantly being watched by their peers. . . .If (hiring aboriginal teachers) fails (to change conditions concerning aboriginal students' "success" in schools), the aboriginal teachers will get the blame, and the cycle continues - blaming the aboriginal people for the failure (Personal document, Jan. 19, 1990).

The unskilled, marginalized, and/or low-status role which aboriginal people play in schools had been addressed by more than one of the policy analysts in our class and provided a springboard for classroom work on the "racial" division of labour. When we met in early February, the students provided other examples from their life experience. Tracy told of her brothers who work for a local auto parts supplier, owned by sons of the local Castle family. "They've really tried," to get better jobs in the company, she recounted bitterly (Fieldnotes, February 2, 1990). But better jobs have not been made accessible to them. Yet "Castle Brothers" is the label that is used to give recognition to the work her brothers do, she said. Barbara provided the example of the local McDonald's fast-food outlets. White people work at the counters and aboriginal people clean the floors. SUNTEP itself was cited as an example. "We don't have any Native people here," one of the women noted. I pointed out that SUNTEP did have an aboriginal person on staff - Laverne. "She's the secretary," another student pointed out with more than a trace of resentment, "and she should be running this place"! I asked if these conditions were generally accepted by aboriginal people as the natural order of things. In some cases they are, it became clear. I used this as a means to illustrate and reinforce the concept of hegemony.

Issues under consideration during these first weeks did not ignore the lives of children in schools. For example, we reviewed research demonstrating the social reproduction of the racial division of labour through the everyday practices of teachers and school administrators in California (Ortiz, 1988). The students were openly angered by the California data.

When I asked them to compare conditions in California with their own experience in schools, either as students or teachers, the evidence of social reproduction through Saskatchewan schooling accumulated quickly.[9] In an informal discussion after the class that day, one of the students, Kate, referred to the disclosure as a "great experience. . . .You don't really think about those things until we started to talk about them. Then you say, 'Yeah, that *does* happen'" (Fieldnotes, Jan. 19, 1990). [10]

During these first weeks the students were indeed becoming "mad all over again." The negative reaction of the students to the course at this stage points to the necessity for anti-racist educators to go beyond critique to constructing practical programs for change. However, the students' anger was also being legitimized, both as classroom discourse and curriculum content, and also in relation to the generalized phenomena of racism. New theoretical concepts - ideology, hegemony, social reproduction - were being introduced, and more familiar concepts (for example, racism) were being re-examined, with which to analyze and describe local and personal experiences at a systemic level. By collectively and vocally remembering their frustration and pain, the students were at the same time openly resisting the conditions which caused it.[13] Together, we were recognizing the pressing necessity to transform existing conditions in order to eliminate such suffering and oppression in the future.

IV (d) Synthesis

It is the rooted capacity of the intellectual to *organize* her class that makes her an *organic* intellectual. This sub-section reviews the consolidation of the students' organic understanding of aboriginal experience and organic interest in change with a theoretical consciousness of how to begin doing it. Our first five meetings represented a process of students and teacher coming together on at least two levels. First, the abstract theoreticism of the teacher and the concrete knowledge of the students became increasingly integrated. Second, a broad analysis of the dimensions, scope, and problem of racism emerged at the same time as the somewhat desperate interest of the students in learning practical skills and understandings for teaching practice began to be met. For the balance of the term, a synthesis of these forces occurred as the students developed a theory for educational change based on anti-racist education and critical pedagogy.

Typically, the remainder of our meetings combined elements of theory with analytical discussion of a section of the text. The text essentially consists of a number of prepared models from which to teach anti-discrimination lessons. Students would arrive at class with up to two hand-written pages of notes from which to argue in small groups for the validity of a lesson from the text and make recommendations for adaptations to local conditions. The students' enthusiastic acceptance of the text may have been motivated by the concrete proposals for action it represented. However, some students were also finding the material of personal value, as one student noticed when she chose to convince her daughter that, in fact, some dentists *are* women. Her practical experience directly related to a textbook activity concerned with the gendered division of labour. Practical suggestions laid out in the text were supplemented with lecture/discussion around a selection of other quite instrumental and concrete matters, such as how to do role-playing in a classroom, the organizing of field trips, or alternative evaluation strategies.

We also began to examine the ideology of social studies curricula for each school grade. My work as a teacher was consistently made easier by the "good sense" of the students. For example, as we reviewed the assertions of the Grade One curriculum, concerned with the family, one student who had already worked in the classroom, repeatedly uttered, "I never noticed that. . ." Her education was aided by her peers, however. The assertion that the father is the head of the family and that "Father plants the potatoes (while) mother makes the potato scallops" was greeted by two single mothers with "Bullshit!" and "That's a crock!" (Fieldnotes, Feb. 23, 1990). On another occasion, I asked the students how children in school are affected by curricular content which does not correspond to their own lived experience. The women responded emphatically. They had felt different, uncomfortable, and self-blaming because they were made to feel like exceptions, and therefore "wrong." Dominant forms of social studies curricula also contribute to a kind of "ignorance," I was informed, because students are afraid to ask questions which are relevant to their lives since they are "abnormal" and do not want to expose this (Fieldnotes, March 16, 1990). The students were speaking from inside their own experience and histories.

In March we began to examine the nature of cultural (re)production in

schools and the notion of resistance based on open dialogue based on a pre-selected reading. For example, in one meeting, students discussed Fordham's (1988) analysis of the tensions academically successful Black students experience as they strive for high achievement. Fordham's analysis is based on a case study of six high-achieving Black high school students. Mary said that she had identified herself with one of Fordham's students. Barbara turned to her and asked, " 'Rita,' right"? Mary *was* "Rita" (Fordham, 1988, pp. 67 - 69). Suprised, I asked Barbara how she had recognized Mary. Barbara claimed that she had also identified with the same person and turned to Fordham's description of "Rita" as "intelligent, creative, hostile, sarcastic, assertive, garrulous, comedic, and manipulative" (p. 67). The other students acknowledged that they were also "Rita," arguing that this is the way to "make it" through school. Kate claimed that "Teachers *do* it to kids," (emphasis in original), remembering that her teachers would say, " 'Kate, I know you can work hard, you can do it.' " They would not do this to other Metis children (Fieldnotes, March 16, 1990). Dialogue was providing a space for students to develop a critique of schooling practices through reflection on the construction of their own identities.

Popular theatre offers an opportunity to "act back" against forms of social oppression which have been experienced by its participants, who devise their own scripts and characters. The students found eminent pleasure in the completion of their major assignment - the play production. On the day of the production, I worked in an adjoining room while the students rehearsed. My work was continuously interrupted by their resounding and gleeful laughter on the other side of the wall. The students had reproduced their recollections of racialized schooling in the form of a one-act play.

Two classes at the end of the term seemed to solidify the students' commitment to critical pedagogy and resistance in education. In the first, we reviewed Michelle Fine's strategy for "naming." Fine analyzes the ways in which schools serve to "silence" student "voice." In opposition to "silencing" she recommends "naming," which refers to "those practices which facilitate critical conversations about social and economic arrangements, particularly about inequitable distribution of power and resources by which some students and their kin suffer disproportionately" (Fine, 1988, p. 157). Through informal lecture, I was moving through Fine's identification of ways of

silencing, illustrating each with examples. Student response was rather casual until I identified "appropriating dissent" and made reference to the customary role of student governments in incorporating student grievances within a set of relations which pacify rather than mobilize students.

One of the younger women, Wendy, murmured "Same as here." Suddenly, the classroom erupted in a flood of angry grievances as students expressed their sentiments about the centre. They did not take their concerns to the nominally democratic student/staff meetings because they felt impotent, their voices drowned by the concerns and interests of other student groups. The SUNTEP centre's student government was of little value because "Everything revolves around two or three people" (Fieldnotes, March 15, 1990). They had made requests to the staff and administration which had either been ignored or responded to belatedly. To issue a complaint was like "getting an 'X' beside your name." The co-ordinator had called their concerns "crap." Again, referring to the staff, a student said "They're supposed to be counselors, but if I tell one (of my personal problems to a staff person), they'll take it to the rest of the staff." Another student claimed that "It's not a safe place anymore." Their critique spread to the parent organization of the centre, saying "It's not just the staff, it's (the Executive Director), too," and described the effect of new rules which had been imposed without consultation to regulate student access to the new building. Thus, the students had identified not only several ways in which they were being "silenced" in the program at different levels of authority, but also some of the concrete effects of the silencing. As the explosion came under self-motivated control, a student concluded, "We're here because we're supposed to change (society). We're Metis! We don't *want* to conform anymore (Emphasis in original)." They had finished. Sudden silence.

"How do you feel about 'naming' as a form of educational endeavour"?, I asked quietly, still awed by the force of the students' vocal resistance.

"Naming"?, Kate queried.

"We just did it," Barbara answered (Fieldnotes, March 15, 1990). The students had collectively begun to describe the nature of their own powerlessness and oppression, within their own culture. Abstract notions were made sensual and concrete. By giving voice to that powerlessness and oppression, they had taken the first step towards developing a strategy and

means for effective resistance and reform. Given that the naming had taken place within the local space of their classroom, they had experienced the school as a site of political struggle (Giroux and Simon, 1989) and had realized one possibility for critical pedagogy. At the same time, that this experience was not generalized outside of the classroom identified a limitation of the centre, however vaguely. And we took no action on these grievances. If I had an opportunity to teach the course again, I would encourage students to analyze the institutional sources of their grievances and to develop a program for some practical change. This became impossible because it was the next to last class meeting of the term, and the students would be permanently leaving the centre at that time.

The second solidifying event occurred on the evening students had been asked to attend a public meeting to commemorate the "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination." Together, we were members of a crowd of less than one hundred in a motel "meeting room" listening to a panel of "experts" on the question of racial discrimination. Only one of the five panelists was aboriginal, and he was a professional from another city. Three of the panelists were Whites: two from the local Catholic clergy, one a local school division administrator. We sat for an hour listening to the speakers. The social isolation of the panelists from the experiences of these aboriginal women was glaring. For example, one panelist observed that "I finally woke up. . .I realized that there were poor people" (Fieldnotes, March 24, 1990). The panel presentations were followed by a talk-show format in which those in attendance were invited to ask questions of the panelists. I rose to challenge the composition of the panel. immediately afterwards, I glanced across the room to where the students were sitting. Barbara thrust her fist upwards, grinning broadly and clapping loudly with the other students. The next morning she told me proudly before class that, "I don't care *who* saw me do that" (Fieldnotes, March 24, 1990). When we met for class the session began with a standing ovation from the students for my actions the previous evening. Much of the class was taken up with the students' expressions of anger towards "being subordinate again" (Fieldnotes, March 24, 1990).

Through these final weeks, the students had consistently deepened their organic relations with both their own personal histories and the experiences of their classmates, specifically and other aboriginal people in general. They

had remembered their sense of alienation from school curricula while at the same time developing a theoretical critique of school knowledge as ideological reproduction. Discussions of course readings had concretized the meaning of cultural reproduction. The production of the play had been an act of critical remembering and an act of resistance as they constructed scenes and script which named the racist and abusive forms of schooling they had known in their earlier lives. In February, on "homework day," they had named forms of oppression from outside the SUNTEP centre. In March, they collectively named their sense of powerlessness within the centre. The action in itself provided some "ownership" of the space they spoke within. The students had taken control of the classroom discourse to use their own voice. Teacher-student relations had been at least temporarily democratized, and the women had learned a "method" for teaching which will remain rooted in their experience. At the "Racial Discrimination" evening, the students had begun to resist a sense of subordination publicly and collectively. Throughout these weeks, both organic connections with other aboriginal people and also a theoretical capacity for contributing to resistance and change had been strengthened.

Results

Two sources of data are available for evaluating the accomplishments of the course: final exams and course evaluations. As an "objective" data source, final examinations suffer from the liability that they are produced for an audience, the instructor, who must assign a grade. Students cannot help but be aware that the instructor will tend to favour "knowledge" towards which s/he is subjectively biased. Final exams are also written under a strict time limitation and do not encourage reflective thought. Nevertheless, the level of critical analysis which students have achieved will be more or less represented through responses to appropriate questions.

The final exam for the course consisted of two questions. The first asked students to "Develop an autobiographical essay in which you demonstrate the usefulness of a selection of (the concepts introduced during the course) for explaining your own educational careers." In the selection which follows, which represents the recollections of Kate, ( ) symbolize brackets constructed by Kate at the time, whereas [ ] symbolize my own parentheses:

> During my education as a young [girl] I experienced many forms of racism. However, at that time I didn't know what racism was. I just figured the teachers hated me. I resisted education in the elementary grades because I knew I couldn't do or get better grades than Janet (White French girl) so instead I [would] "fool around" (talk and laugh during lessons). . .We [got] to the point where I would bad mouth the teacher and she'd say, "You're all the same (Metis). I had to give up or else I would get sent to the principal's office like every Metis person. . . .By the teachers making me and my Metis friends feel like we were not as good as the White kids and having a low expectation of us (ideology that Metis people are dumb) we fulfilled it by getting angry, resisting and rebelling. . . .
>
> I got to Junior High and was getting over all my hatred for the White girls, probably because I was now trying to fit in with them. I was not causing anymore trouble to the teachers, but just going along with the flow (hegemony). They had won. . . .(In high school) I was on the SRC committee, but only because I had quit rebelling. . . .When I heard teachers calling Metis students down I didn't do anything about it because I liked where I was and didn't want to go down. I accepted the idea (ideological hegemony).

Lois' autobiographical account is also worth quoting at length:

> I knew by Grade 3 or 4 that I was never going to be asked any difficult questions. When I went home I never said anything about how I was treated in school. I figured that these are teachers and this is how I was supposed to [be] learning in school. I remember a couple of times trying to talk to my parents but they had gone to Residential schools and they were treated worse. . . . The concept (that) I feel is useful in describing and analyzing my experience is hegemony because. . .to (my parents), schools knew what was best for everyone. They thought that the school had power over them and as long as they sent us everyday to school, everything would be all right. The hidden curriculum concept describes how I was taught in school. The books we used never had any positive things to say about native people. We. . .read books and saw films that depicted Native people as lazy, unreliable savages. . . with no ambition to do anything. The concept I feel that describes some of my school experience is. . .ideological hegemony and social reproduction.

Tracy remembered how she strived to be a good, acceptable student in school. She was very quiet, which she now feels "reinforced the label that Metis or Indians are 'dumb' and don't know anything. This kept me down and reinforced a racist label." She now views her behaviour as a form of "cultural reproduction." Tracy refers to a high school teacher who "would always put women down" because they were perceived as "stupid when it comes to algebra and geo-trig" as a form of "silencing." She is self-critical for "call(ing)

Indians down because everyone else did" and refers to this as the realization of hegemony. She is also self-critical for accepting the "hidden curriculum" of competition and "banking" because it has shaped her approach to academic work.

Despite their critique of the SUNTEP program the day they "named", most of the students referred to their experience in SUNTEP with pride and appreciation because they had developed their sense of identity and history. However, one of the students, Hazel, added that professors from the university:

> (H)ave classed us as poor little natives who have a hard time to understand concepts, (and) therefore they attempt to teach in simple language and terms. The University . . .views us as different and therefore demand(s) we do a residency at the university to prove we are capable of acquiring a teacher's certificate. The (program's parent organization) views us as untrustworthy, and therefore have strict rules we must abide by. By doing all of these things to us, the above are working towards reproducing what they view as a Metis society.

Barbara, who "was a cultural reproducer to the extent that I got married right out of high school because I was never shown or told that I could do anything else," is also concerned about the contradictory effect of the program. She argues that she is:

> . . .forming a new. . .cultural production because (SUNTEP students) are not the cloned or standard type of teacher the (university) turns out each year. We have different views, ideals, and values. (However), everything I am learning at SUNTEP and the education I am getting is forming a cultural production to such an extent that I am now almost always excluded from my family. . . .(A)s far as my brothers and father are concerned, I am no longer relevant. . . .Maybe that is why some people continue to culturally reproduce.

The set of statements six of eight of the students made on formal course evaluations at the beginning of our final meeting may have provide them with more freedom to express their assessments of our collective experience. The forms were collected by a student, then mailed to the Department of Curriculum Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. They were then transcribed into a single type-written report and returned to me. Thus, the responses are anonymously given. The students were made fully aware of this process: therefore the amount of coercion or influence from me on what they wrote was minimized. The following data is presented from an analysis

of the themes which emerged within the students' discourse.

Every one of the students referred to their negative reactions at the beginning of the term. While fifty per cent of this small sample (three) said their initial reaction was that the course content was irrelevant, two noted a relationship between "power" and my inaccessible and abstract theoreticism. As one said, "At the beginning of the class, I felt that the instructor had most of the power because he lectured to the point where we understood nothing." On the other hand, both students expressed a sense that "speaking out meant something" after the group's confrontation of me had led to changes.

Four of the six students explicitly valued the process of negotiation, while the same number expressed their appreciation of the dialogical approach. Referring to negotiation, one of the students claimed that "There seemed to be an equal amount of power from both instructor and student because we were always consulted and asked for an opinion when assignments were given." Concerning dialogue, a student who felt that "His method of teaching was good because he made us think and allowed us to voice our own thought and opinion" was representative. However, the dominant valuations from the students (five of six) were that the course taught them something about themselves and that it would aid them in "influencing this much needed change." For example, one student found that "This course allowed me to look at my education and how I can change it when I'm out there so it doesn't happen to others like me." Another claims that "I learned a lot about what the instructor wanted us to learn but I also learned a lot about myself. . .the lessons I learned were and are very valuable." A third commented that:

> I felt that this class was/is helping me understand why I was treated this way. I wanted to learn more about how to make the system better. . . .This class has provided me with positive ideas about what I would use when I go out teaching .

Appreciation for teaching strategies introduced in the class was also consistently expressed in students' final exams. Support was most strongly expressed for the strategies of dialogue and "naming." Wendy, for example, claimed that the course was:

> (A) primary example of student voice in the classroom. This had an effect on us because we were allowed to see what can occur in a classroom which focused on student voice. . . .I want my classroom to be a "safe place" were student voice is most

important.

Tracy agreed that the the course had "given me a voice - my student voice." Barbara noted that "by allowing us to bring up our grievances . . .naming took place." Hazel supports "critical pedagogy" because it "allows for students' personal experience" (Fieldnotes, April 6, 1990). There are signs here of a commitment to a democratic classroom which incorporates dialogue, children's cultural experience, and the possibility of critique.

V. Conclusions

The results reflected in the final exams and the course evaluations show that the aboriginal women in this study are potentially organic intellectuals. They speak from the experience of aboriginal people schooled in a racist and class-divided province. The accounts which have been cited throughout the text of this paper, in the students' papers on multiculturalist education policies; in their account of the regional racial division of labour; in their discussion of schooling for indigenous children; in their reflections on alienation from school curricula; and in their reactions to their subordinate position at the "Racial Discrimination" evening provide corroborating evidence to the thesis that the students speak from the subject position of marginalized and racialized people. They can now claim a theoretical consciousness from the fields of anti-racist education and critical pedagogy to articulate the systemic roots of racist and class-biased schooling. They also have the elements of a "language of possibility" to begin the process of change. Evidence from the "homework day" account, the "naming" experience, some evidence from the "Racial Discrimination" evening, and substantive evidence from the course evaluations also demonstrates that the women have an interest in actively resisting and furthering change.

There is no certainty that the SUNTEP students will fulfill a role of organic intellectuals, however. One of the women already speaks of her estrangement from her family because of her academic training. Furthermore, pressures will continue to be exerted on these future teachers to withdraw from the struggle for change. A commitment to actively resisting the power structure was less evident at the beginning of the course. At least two of the women managed to get through school by adopting a form of "racelessness" (Fordham, 1988), through identifying with non-aboriginal students and joining in discriminatory practices against aboriginal students.

The response of the preservice teachers to the racism exercised against SUNTEP students within the local school systems was to adopt a defensive strategy for being "excellent" teachers, which meant, in part, not appearing to be troublesome. It takes unusual courage and stamina to maintain an active commitment to social and educational change, so the students should not be condemned if they begin to conform as hegemonic pressures on them persist.

The evidence presented in this paper shows, however, that these are not "cloned and standard type" preservice teachers. Rather, they are "cultural producers" engaged in "the constitution of identity through the reaccentuation of speech genres" (Flores & Yudice, 1990, p. 73). Specifically, as they appropriate elements of educational discourse and integrate them with their own autobiographical histories and lived negotiation with racist school structures, they will produce new forms of teaching attitudes and practice. Their practical consciousness of the everyday world means that at one level they understand the nature and processes of racism better than the most theoretically-advanced college instructor. They have now incorporated opportunities to learn and develop strategies for change, the confidence that they could make a difference without taking unrealistic risks, and a more theoretical and systematic understanding of the general character of racism and racist schooling.

What I was able to offer them, despite errors of theoreticism and idealism, was both the opportunity and the information to develop a more objective, systematic, and critical analysis of racist education in general, the first stages of a strategy to confront it, and some sense of power in the classroom. A critical pedagogy based on democracy and critical analysis of students' own biographies and lived cultural lives was a necessary condition for meeting these goals, as it provided the space and process for the women's "empowerment" as students, and subsequent confidence-building, as well as for the maturation of their critiques and self-criticisms. The errors I initially made might have been avoided if: (a) my commitment to "negotiation" had included a more collective and intellectually honest negotiation of course requirements; (b) I had applied my materialist philosophy and theoretical celebration of "lived culture" to more fully respecting the capacity of my students to determine their own cultural form in the context of the actually existing political economy. In other words, the content of students'

responses to the course requirements should have been examined in the context of their racialized position as preservice teachers in Forestland at the outset of the course; (c) my commitment to dialogue had begun with the use of a language that was was intelligible by the students. As it was, I initially came very close to providing a "leftist" reproduction of the classic contradiction between the ideology of the school and teacher and the cultural form of the students.

Three abiding lessons remain from this experience. First, critical pedagogy creates an elasticity in the social relations of the classroom which is forgiving. Without a dialogical strategy, conflicts between the students and myself would probably have remained unresolved. Through dialogue, we can support aboriginal preservice teachers' efforts to incorporate formal educational discourse and critical theory on terms which may not produce alienation from their communities at the same time as we "unlearn (our) privileged discourse so that . . .(we) can be heard" (Spivak, 1990, p. 57). We can also continue to learn ways of working *with* rather than *on* our students' cultural lives. Second, progressive teacher educators have to continue to work towards a more satisfactory integration of concrete ideas for practice in everyday classrooms, which we can share with preservice teachers, and more abstract and general critiques of conventional schooling and visions of an educational future. To quote Paulo Freire, "It is not that methods and techniques are not important. But they must serve the objectives contained in a cultural plan" (1983, p. 78).[13] Third, we will also do well to remember Freire's advocacy of "the practice of thinking about practice, through which practice is perfected" (1983, p. 25). In other words, self-conscious practice provides an opportunity to resolve contradictions between teachers' "common sense", inherited from our own elementary and secondary schooling and Colleges of Education, and our theoretical consciousness as critical pedagogues.

Endnotes

1. The use of "language of possibility" and "language of critique" used in this paper are shorthand phrases for referring to opposite sides of a contradiction manifested in contemporary capitalist schools in North America (Carnoy and Levin, 1985). "Language of possibility" refers to concepts, theories, and practices which offer the practical possibility for advancing the interests of subordinate populations within the context of the school as a site of political struggle. "Language of critique" refers to the accumulation of insights and theoretical analyses which have been produced over the past twenty years to show the ways in which class, race, and gender inequalities are reproduced within everyday schooling practices and curricula. The two phrases are developed at length in Aronowitz & Giroux's Education under seige (See bibliography).

2. In 1981, for example, 81.5% of the elementary school teachers in Canada were women (Marshall, 1987, p.8).

3. There are a number of reasons for this problem, not the least of which is the low base salary offered to employees through a program substantially dependent on government grants for its operating capital.

4. For a discussion of the problem of minority role models, see Austin, R. (1989, Fall). Saphphire bound!, (539 - 578).

5. By "praxical" here I mean the integration of theory-building with the practical lives of the students. Freire observes that "(I)t is not possible to divorce the process of learning from its own source within the lives of the learners themselves" (1983, p. 42), and goes on to argue that:

   > Only at a distance can (students) get a perspective that permits them to emerge from that daily routine and begin their own independent development. The necessary precondition to taking a distance from "dailiness" is the analysis of past and present practice and the extension of this analysis into their possible future, remembering always that every practice is social in character (1983, p. 57).

6. We are reminded of Spivak's (1990) observation that:

   > There is an impulse among literary critics and other kinds of intellectuals to save the masses, speak for the masses, describe the masses. On the other hand, how about attempting to learn to speak in such a way that the masses will not regard as bullshit (p. 56).

7. The state operates as an " 'educator' " (Gramsci, 1971, p. 247) (to) conform. . .civil society to the economic structure"(p.208). Elsewhere, Gramsci tells us that "The revolution which the bourgeois class has brought into the conception of law, and hence into the function of the state consists especially in the will to conform" (1971, p. 260). In other words, the state uses many resources in civil society, including

but not only formal schooling, to "educate" us to *want* to conform. We should not, then, assume that members of subordinate populations will readily or magically ignore years of this conditioning and leap at opportunities to challenge the existing social order. Rather, it becomes a responsibility of the critical pedagogue to challenge the incorporation of hegemonic thinking and "common sense" by members of those groups we are committed to serving (Shor & Freire, 1987). To do anything less is to submit to opportunism. At the same time, this must be done without arrogance about one's own position, with sensitivity to and reciprocity with the cultural form of our students, and also consciousness of the limitations imposed by political economy. "Teachers must locate their specific concerns for teaching practice within the dynamics of the social formation and the general well-being of their students" (Freire, 1983, p. 56).

The generalizations I make here are simplistic. In some ways, students had or were taking action on issues of importance to them before the class began. On the first day of class, for example, one student angrily shared a racist sheet circulating in the community which advertised "open (hunting) season on Indians." Another student, who had worked as a teacher, had been disciplined by her employer because she had taken action against a parent's physical abuse of one of her students.

8. This is commonplace amongst schools and programs produced as affirmative action programs, and is a feature of "common sense" racism. (Marable, 1985).

9. I was later approached by a student and advised that students were not in opposition to a contextualizing of social studies material, but they were simply objecting to what seemed like a relative absence of it. I was also advised that the students felt they could risk confronting me without suffering for it; whereas they would not have felt the same with other instructors they have had.

10. Among the experiences which the students reported concerning the schooling of aboriginal children in Saskatchewan: (a) When aboriginal children move to the city, they are "automatically" placed one grade behind their incoming status; (b) When they move to a new school, immediate placement in the "resource room" is frequent; (c) conversations on the playground in the aboriginal language continue to be discouraged; (d) standardized tests continue to be administered; (e) outright rudeness towards aboriginal students from teachers.

11. The students were, of course, not only engaged in dialogue with their teacher, but with each other. This contributed to the deepening of a "group ethos, the very stuff of self-formation" (Flores & Yudice, 1990, p. 74).

12. During these early meetings I was struck by the confirmation in practice of the difficulties in separating factors of "race", class, and gender in the real world. When we examined children's books, students' analyses were

as attentive to dimensions of class evident in fur trade depictions as they were to "racial" stereotypes. When I illustrated the gendered division of labour in Canada, the women's interest and anger was as evident as during any discussion of racism. Of course, Tracy's hostility to the Castle brothers was an expression of both class and "race" antagonism. (See also Poelzer, 1989).

13. For an excellent suggestion of one way to integrate specific practical concerns with broader social goals in teaching, see Henry Giroux's essay, "Overcoming behavioral and humanistic objectives" in Teachers as Intellectuals (1988) (pp. 43 - 53).

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